

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 691

By DeBerry L

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Howard R. Richardson of Memphis.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Howard R. Richardson; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Richardson was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a champion for the rights of the union worker, Mr. Richardson served the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union with unwavering passion and dedication for forty-four years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Richardson's lifelong work with labor relations began in 1959, when the young bellman attended his first union meeting, and his enthusiasm so impressed the other attendees that he was appointed secretary-treasurer and later became field representative; and

WHEREAS, one of the first black union organizers in the 1960s South, Howard Richardson made a steady ascent through the ranks to become Administrative Assistant to the General President in 1975 and was elected International Vice President in 1983, in which position he represented the union through the United States and abroad; and

WHEREAS, during his impressive tenure as Vice President, he worked with organizations such as the A. Phillip Randolph Institute, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Congressional Black Caucus, the NAACP, the Democratic Party, and the AFL-CIO Labor Council, among others; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Richardson also negotiated National Master Agreements with domestic and foreign companies and taught classes on collective bargaining techniques, dispute resolutions, grievance procedures, and union administration; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his role with this organization, Mr. Richardson served as the former president of the Shelby County AFL-CIO Labor Council and chairman of the NAACP Labor and Industry Committee; and

WHEREAS, after retiring as Senior Vice President of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union in 2002, Howard Richardson remained active in various community organizations, such as the Memphians and the Shelby County Democratic Party, in which he held longtime membership and served on the Shelby County Democratic Steering Committee; and

WHEREAS, a loyal veteran, Mr. Richardson also served his country and community as a member of the United States Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, born in Senatobia, Mississippi, to tenant farmers Reverend Rich Richardson and Lillian Metcalf Richardson, Howard Richardson later moved with his family to Shelby County, where he attended the local grade schools and Geeter High School; and

WHEREAS, a faithful Christian since his baptism at Hickory Hill Baptist Church at age twelve, Mr. Richardson was an active and devout member of Mt. Olive C.M.E. Church, where he taught the Men's Bible Class and served on the Steward Board and the Trustee Board; and

WHEREAS, Howard Richardson was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, a loving and faithful family man, he was preceded in death by his wife, Mildred "Nickey" Burgess Richardson, with whom he enjoyed many blissful years of marriage; and

WHEREAS, his memory will be cherished by his three daughters, Elois J. Frazier, Karen Swan, and Mary Elizabeth "Maryam" Husain; his son, Howard R. Richardson, Jr., and his wife, Loraine; his sister, Mamie Eldridge, and her husband, Charles; his three brothers, Curtis Richardson and his wife, Juanita, F.C. Richardson and his wife, Bernice, Raymond Richardson and his wife, Lillie; his brother-in-law, Bobby Burgess and his wife, Elizabeth; his two granddaughters, two grandsons, and three great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, and godchildren; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Richardson will also be sorely missed by the community of workers and union leaders that he valiantly and tirelessly served all his life; and

WHEREAS, Howard Richardson leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Howard R. Richardson, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Richardson.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.